INSTRUCTIONAL AND GUIDANCE INFORMATION

Legal Services Program
Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) Program
Evaluation Plan Form

The TIG Evaluation Plan identifies how a TIG Grantee will evaluate the progress and accomplishments of its project. The plan should provide the basic framework and data sources for the final evaluation report. (The final report form and instructions are available from the LSC Office of Program Performance Technology website at: http://tig.lsc.gov/evaluation.php) This document provides instructional and guidance information for completing the evaluation plan form.[1] An example of a completed evaluation plan form is provided after the instructions.

For questions about completing the TIG project evaluation plan form please contact Taylor Healy (202-295-1565; healyt@lsc.gov) or Bristow Hardin (202-295-1553; hardinb@lsc.gov) in the LSC Office of Program Performance.

Grant and Contact Information ***[Except for "Approval Date," applicant should provide all information in this section]***

Grantee name: **TIG Grant number:**
Submission date: ***[Date submitted to LSC]*** **Approval Date:** ***[LSC will complete]***

Contact person: **Phone number:**
Email address:

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[1] **NOTE**: LSC awarded Innovation Network (InnoNet) a TIG grant to provide TIG grantees with evaluation assistance and resource materials. Detailed on-line information and assistance for completing LSC Evaluation Plans is available through a special section of the InnoNet website at: www.innonet.org/services/lsc_train. Click on "Additional Resources" for access to the *Evaluation Plan Manual*. The Management and Information Exchange Technology Evaluation Project funded through TIG also developed valuable evaluation materials. They are available at: http://www.lstech.org/TIG/eval.

Form Prototype: See Instructions and Example of Completed Form Below

Project Goal			
Project Objectives	**Strategies/Activities to Achieve Goals**	**Evaluation Questions**	**Evaluation Data**

INSTRUCTIONAL INFORMATION FOR EACH FORM COLUMN

Project Goals & Objectives

Evaluators have varying views about the differences between and relationships among goals and objectives. In general terms, goals should specify a project's broad and longer term intended results for (or impact on) a specified target population. Objectives are more specific, concrete and measurable. They provide the concrete standards managers use to assess a project's achievements. For TIG evaluation plans, grantees should first identify the project's overriding goal(s) and then list the specific objectives.

Two overriding factors should shape the development and implementation of all TIG project evaluation plans and evaluations. First, TIG is a research and development program. LSC has funded particular projects to develop and/or assess the effectiveness of different technologies in the legal services delivery system. Second, major *goals* of the TIG program include "significantly increase[ing] access to legal information, self-help resources and assistance for low-income Americans." A related goal is improving the effectiveness and efficiency of legal services providers. Accordingly, the major project goal(s)/objectives should identify the specific system(s) to be developed and/or implemented through the project and specify how these system(s) will increase access to legal information, self-help resources or assistance for clients, increase the quality and quantity of services provided to clients and/or enhance LSC grantees' effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services.
Please see the last page of this document for a completed example of the approved evaluation format.

Example of Format: 1 Goal Statement with Several Objectives

Goal: *In collaboration with the State Supreme Court's Court Assistance Office (CAO), the project will increase the quality of service and accessibility to the courts for low income people in an effective and efficient manner using simple online interviews available to self-litigants on the program's and CAO's websites. Specific project <u>objectives</u> include:*

- *Developing online interviews to accommodate more than 300 forms and instructions universally accepted in the state's Courts.*
- *Enabling 25,000 persons to access the online court forms in year one and 40,000 persons in year two.*
- *Developing and disseminating 25 Spanish online interviews and corresponding court forms in year two.*
- *Conducting an education and outreach plan in our partnership with the Idaho Supreme Court and with advocacy groups to inform our target audience of the Pro Se Project.*

Strategies/Activities to Achieve Goals

In this section of the form, grantees should identify one or more major strategies and activities they will undertake to achieve each of the project goals. These strategies and activities should correspond to the objective directly next to it in the grid structure provided. Some strategies and activities can correspond to more than one objective. If this is the case, simply place that strategy in the boxes directly next to *each* of the objectives to which it corresponds. The activities should flow logically from and be directly related to the objectives.

For example, major activities for the project in the example above could include, but not be limited to:

- *Obtaining HotDocs and A2J software and hiring a template developer to create the online interviews for the 300+ court forms and instructions.*
- *Working with (a) the State Supreme Court's Standard Forms Committee to develop forms that will be universally accepted in state Courts and (b) the Pro Se Project Oversight Committee to ensure interactive forms meet users' needs.*
- *Training advocates on how to use the online interviews and assist self-litigants in using the program.*
- *Hiring a court-certified interpreter to have online interviews corresponding to 25 Court forms translated into Spanish.*
- *Developing and launching a community and education outreach plan for the English and Spanish online interviews*

Evaluation Questions

These are the questions one must answer to determine the extent to which, or ways in which, the project (a) is on course and (b) achieves its goal and objectives. In other words, the answers to these questions will tell you how effectively your project is being implemented and/or your project's progress towards its goals. These questions should elicit specific, concrete information, be directly related to the project goal, objectives and strategies and be placed in the box in the grid next to the objective and strategy to which it corresponds. As with the strategies, if a question pertains to more than one strategy simply place that question in the boxes directly next to *each* of the strategies to which it corresponds.

TIG has funded projects in a wide range of areas, such as pro se, intake, web site enhancements, state technology planning, and case management. Despite their differences, all of these projects directly or indirectly focus on increasing clients' access to quality services and/or enhancing the effectiveness of LSC grantees. Many evaluation questions for most projects will focus on a common set of issues, such as the impact, usability, and usefulness of the project's services or systems for clients, program staff, and/or partners (e.g., the courts, community providers).

Effective evaluation questions seldom take a yes/no form, e.g., "Is the system easy to use?" Instead, these questions should be framed in terms such as "To what extent …?" or "In what ways?" Answers to these questions will typically provide evaluative data to show how successful a project was, the ways in which it has been successful and areas in which improvements can be made.
For example, evaluation questions for the project in the above example could include, but not be limited to:

- *How many of the online interviews were created for the 300+ court forms and instructions?*
- *To what extent did the partnerships with the State Supreme Court Committees lead to the development of statewide court forms?*
- *Do the interactive forms meet users' needs?*
- *To what extent did the trainings for advocates provide necessary skills and knowledge to assist self-litigants using the program?*
- *How many of the online interviews were translated into Spanish and what was their impact?*
- *How well have the online services met the needs of the community and addressed the current trends in necessary legal assistance?*
- *What improvements and/or additions were made to the court forms and instructions per data received from online interviews?*
- *Have our online interviews and materials improved clients' ability to accurately complete their legal forms?*

Evaluation Data
This column of the grid is where you should list each type of data that can be used to answer the questions in the previous column. If certain data can be used to answer more than one question, simply place the data in <u>*each*</u> of the boxes next to the corresponding questions. Three basic sets of data will be most useful in answering evaluation questions. The most effective evaluations will use a combination of these data types, which include:

A. *Administrative data*. These data typically can be obtained and compiled easily and inexpensively because they are readily available from a variety of sources. Consider the following examples. A program's case management or intake system can provide data about the total number of clients served, clients served in particular regions, and individuals served from different populations groups, such as the elderly, LEP individuals or those with limited literacy. Partners' data bases can provide invaluable information. For example, a court can provide information about the total number of pro se filings or the filings in particular legal areas. WebTrends or similar data systems can identify the number and type of documents downloaded from websites.

B. *Survey data*. Surveys provide a relatively quick and easy way to collect uniform data regarding the efficiency, effectiveness and utility of different systems. They can be tailored to different groups, such as clients, advocates, other program staff, and staff of partner organizations. Respondents can easily and quickly complete surveys that have closed ended responses (i.e., yes-no or multiple choice) and short answer formats. In addition, surveys provide quantitative data that are easy to analyze, and that some people find most compelling.

C. *In-depth Interviews and other Qualitative Data*. Data from in-depth interviews with clients, program staff, staff of partner programs or others using or affected by project's services provide a fuller understanding of a system's strengths and weaknesses than data from other sources alone. These interviews allow one to follow-up on respondents' answers in order to obtain more detailed and specific information regarding the effectiveness of systems and how they can be improved. Direct observation also provides valuable information. For example, by watching clients attempt to find information on a website, web designers can identify ways to improve the site's usability.

Note: Do not worry about developing "scientific" samples for surveys and interviews. Statistically valid samples are unnecessary and impractical for these evaluations. Rather, try to develop strategic samples that are roughly representative of those affected by the project. The practical validity these samples provide enables evaluators to effectively assess project strengths and weaknesses.

Completed evaluation plans should be shared with others in the program to inform and obtain appropriate input from other staff about the project's goals, objectives and evaluation activities.

Following is an example of a completed evaluation plan.

COMPLETED EVALUATION PLAN SAMPLE			
Goal: In collaboration with the State Supreme Court's Court Assistance Office (CAO), the project will increase the quality of service and accessibility to the courts for low income people in an effective and efficient manner using simple online interviews available to self-litigants on the program's and CAO's websites. Specific project objectives are listed below.			
Project Objectives	**Strategies/Activities to Achieve Objectives**	**Evaluation Questions**	Evaluation Data
Objective 1: Develop online interviews to accommodate more than 300 forms and instructions universally accepted in the state's Courts.	• Obtain HotDocs and A2J software and hiring a template developer to create the online interviews for the 300+ court forms and instructions. • Work with (a) the State Supreme Court's Standard Forms Committee to develop forms that will be universally accepted in state Courts and (b) the Pro Se Project Oversight Committee to ensure interactive forms meet users' needs	• How many of the online interviews were created for the 300+ court forms and instructions? • To what extent did the partnerships with the State Supreme Court Committees lead to the development of statewide court forms? • Do the interactive forms meet users' needs? • What improvements and/or additions were made to the court forms and instructions per data received from online interviews? • Have our online interviews and materials improved clients' ability to accurately complete their legal forms?	• Number of online interviews created • Qualitative data about the partnerships obtained through interviews with partners. • Results from online interviews • List and explanation of revisions made to the online court forms system based on data obtained through the online interviews • Results from in-person interviews conducted with clients after they complete the forms.
Objective 2: Enable 25,000 persons to access the online court forms in year one and 40,000 persons in year two.	• Work with (a) the State Supreme Court's Standard Forms Committee to develop forms that will be universally accepted in state Courts and (b) the Pro Se Project Oversight Committee to ensure interactive forms meet users' needs.	• To what extent did the partnerships with the State Supreme Court Committees lead to the development of statewide court forms? • How well have the online services met the needs of the community and addressed the current trends in necessary legal assistance? • Have our online interviews and materials improved clients' ability to accurately complete their legal forms?	• Qualitative data about the partnerships obtained through interviews with partners • In-person interviews with people in the client community • Results from in-person interviews conducted with clients after they complete the forms.

COMPLETED EVALUATION PLAN SAMPLE (Continued)			
Goal: In collaboration with the State Supreme Court's Court Assistance Office (CAO), the project will increase the quality of service and accessibility to the courts for low income people in an effective and efficient manner using simple online interviews available to self-litigants on the program's and CAO's websites. Specific project objectives are listed below.			
Project Objectives	**Strategies/Activities to Achieve Objectives**	**Evaluation Questions**	Evaluation Data
Objective 3: Develop and disseminating 25 Spanish online interviews and corresponding court forms in year two	• Hire a court-certified interpreter to have online interviews corresponding to 25 Court forms translated into Spanish.	• How many of the online interviews translated into Spanish and what was their impact?	• The number of online interviews translated into Spanish • The number of times these interviews were accessed and successfully completed by clients
Objective 4: Conduct an education and outreach plan in our partnership with the Idaho Supreme Court and with advocacy groups to inform our target audience of the Pro Se Project.	• Train advocates on the online interview system so they can assist self-litigants in using the program. • Develop and launch a community and education outreach plan for the English and Spanish online interviews	• To what extent did the trainings for advocates provide necessary skills and knowledge to assist self-litigants using the program?	• Feedback received from training participants. • Results from client interviews on advocate involvement in the online interview process.